

## **Information from *The Cairo Bulletin* and its proprietor Nigel Wassif**

A photo in the *Bulletin* shows Sir Aubrey, Roger Carlyle, Hypatia Masters, and Dr. Robert Huston emerging from a dinner in their honour at the Turf Club, two days after their arrival in Cairo. Carlyle is blond and handsome; Huston is darker and plumper, with a somewhat worried smile; Sir Aubrey is white-haired, tall, and distinguished; Hypatia Masters is blond and beautifully gowned. A man in a tight tuxedo in the background may be Jack Brady, but as a mere employee he is unidentified.

The expedition arrives in Cairo in May of 1919, avowedly to survey for and excavate concerning the Third Dynasty of Egypt, a shadowy period. After investigations near Giza, work shifted first to a Saqqara site and then to Dhashur. Since the specific digs seemed unrelated to known Third Dynasty locations, speculation arose about secret purposes of the expedition, and the Black Pharaoh was mentioned several times. Later, rumour persistently maintained that the expedition had made an astonishing find.

In July of 1919, the expedition suddenly embarked for Mombasa, ostensibly on holiday, and in fact Roger Carlyle was frequently reported to be sick just before this time. As spokesman, Sir Aubrey indicated that the summer was too hot for Carlyle, and also implied that the impending seasonal flood of the Nile would cover an important site for several months. Several photos show Hypatia Masters with her camera ("Miss Masters Prepares for a Camera Safari in Kenya"), Miss Masters also "fell ill" in June, and had not yet recovered when the group departed for Kenya. Wassif does remember that the Carlyle Expedition "was simply horrid" in keeping visitors away from its sites, including the press. He also recalls that the principals of the expedition had dinner several times with Omar Shakti, a wealthy cotton plantation owner whom Wassif finds repellent and whose private reputation is unsavoury.